

Version With Markings To Show Changes Made

In the Claims:

Please amend claims as follows:

Amended 1. A piezoelectric element comprising:

a plurality of piezoelectric layers comprising a piezoelectric material which is a bismuth-based ceramic comprising Sr, Bi, Ti, and O;

at least three vibration electrodes opposing each other, each disposed among the piezoelectric layers, and

an energy-confining region formed in a region in which the vibration electrodes overlap and exciting an n-order longitudinal thickness vibration;

wherein the maximum length L of a secant between two intersections on the periphery of the energy-confining region and the distance t between the topmost vibration electrode and the bottommost vibration electrode satisfy the ratio  $nL/t < 10$ , wherein n is greater than 1.

Amended 3. A piezoelectric element comprising:

a plurality of piezoelectric layers comprising a piezoelectric material which is a bismuth-based ceramic comprising Ca, Bi, Ti, and O;

at least three vibration electrodes opposing each other, each disposed among the piezoelectric layers; and

an energy-confining region formed in a region in which the vibration electrodes overlap and exciting an n-th order longitudinal thickness vibration;

wherein the maximum length L of a secant between two intersections on the periphery of the energy-confining region and the distance t between the topmost vibration electrode and the bottommost vibration electrode satisfy the ratio  $nL/t < 9$ , wherein n is an

integer greater than 1.

Amended 5. A piezoelectric element comprising:

a plurality of piezoelectric layers comprising a piezoelectric material which is a bismuth-based ceramic comprising Sr, Bi, Nb, and O;

at least three vibration electrodes opposing each other, each disposed among the piezoelectric layers; and

an energy-confining region formed in a region in which the vibration electrodes overlap and exciting an n-th order longitudinal thickness vibration;

wherein the maximum length L of a secant between two intersections on the periphery of the energy-confining region and the distance t between the topmost vibration electrode and the bottommost vibration electrode satisfy the ratio  $nL/t < 10$ , wherein n is an integer greater than 1.